



Mental Health Ministry Grant Projects

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Updated November 22, 2010

About this resource

Thank you to everyone participating in the Mental Health Ministry Grant Program and to all whose giving support it.

Each slide contains one grant project, grouped in this order: seminaries, mid-councils, congregations.

Project descriptions are loosely color-coded according to key elements of mental health ministry that are emerging across many of the projects.

Together the slides paint a picture of the breadth and scope of capacity-building projects in mental health ministry currently underway in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as of November 2020. As new projects are approved, they will be added.

It is hoped that in their sharing, the descriptions will inspire and spark others.

Mental Health Ministry

Emerging elements

- ▶ 'First responder' relationships
- ▶ 'Walking alongside' relationships
- ▶ 'Trauma-informed' lens/community practices
- ▶ 'Culture change' - creating stigma-free faith communities
(theological lens, mental health/mental illness literacy, story-sharing, 'nothing about us without us,' person-first language, trauma-informed & neurodiversity lenses)
- ▶ External networking and advocacy
(networking faith communities with local mental health services/providers for referrals; partnering with local stakeholders to address intersectional issues like homelessness, poverty, racism, crisis intervention services.)
- ▶ Addressing mental health in intercultural BIPOC & Immigrant/Refugee communities

Seminary

- ▶ **Pittsburgh Theological Seminary** - virtual continuing education curriculum to equip church leaders for mental health resourcing (adult, teen—can tailor to rural or urban settings) : **theological lens for mental health ministry, differentiating spiritual/mental health needs** **Mental Health First Aid training (adult, teen)** **developing local mental health referral networks.**

Synod

- ▶ **Synod of Lakes & Prairies** - Identifying pathways to culturally appropriate mental health care for BIPOC communities including immigrant & refugee communities.

Presbytery

- ▶ **St. Augustine Presbytery** - comprehensive mental health ministry equipping strategy (needs assessment, training, education & support for 4 regions), content kits: **Mental Health First Aid (locally available)**, **QPR suicide prevention**, **Take Time to Talk (anti-bullying for parents/teens)**, **Feel Good Jeopardy (seniors)**, **Jesus Loves Me Story Time (pre-school/elem)**, **Mental Health Wednesdays virtual conversations.**

Presbytery

- ▶ **Eastern Oregon Presbytery** - bringing faith communities, community mental health programs, & peers together for dialogue, **Mental Health First Aid training**.

Presbytery

- ▶ **Missouri Union & Northern Kansas Presbytery (6 Mid-America presbyteries)**
 - comprehensive mental health ministry equipping strategy; surveyed pastors/leaders - partnering with Leaderwise/others to develop programming—equip 60+ churches for mental health ministry: **introductory education about mental illnesses, suicide prevention strategies, continuing pastoral education-- how to support/advocate for families in crisis, making referrals, preaching to raise awareness.**

Presbytery

- ▶ **Chicago Presbytery** - comprehensive mental health ministry equipping strategy: (1-3 leaders/congregation do **Companionship training (from Pathways to Promise)**, 1 -2 leaders attend *Understanding Adverse Childhood Experiences: Building Self-Healing Communities Workshop*, recruit 2 - 4 persons (Chicago South, southwest/far south suburban) and **host at least one Mental Health First Aid training**. Assess next steps with Survey Monkey)
Partner: Chicagoland Trauma-informed Care Network, *Risking Connection: Trauma-informed Faith Communities curriculum* can be offered as workshop for congregations. McCormick Seminary is co-convenor for *Trauma Symposium Seminars*.

NWC - San Jose Presbytery

- ▶ **NWC: Sweaty Sheep, San Jose, CA (San Jose)** - use of recreational retreats to overcome stigma, facilitate deep listening and story-sharing across divides (homelessness, severe mental illnesses, substance disorders, cognitive impairment) to create space for mutual learning and understanding.

Presbytery (ministers)

- ▶ **Lake Michigan Presbytery** - ongoing support group/s for ministers facilitated by external clinician to overcome isolation and destigmatize mental health challenges in ministry—create safe space to explore issues/challenges arising in ministry, be referred for additional individual help as needed.

Presbytery (ministers)

- ▶ **Cascades Presbytery** - ongoing support and self-care group for ministers using 'embodied practices' informed by neuroscience and an understanding of trauma that ministers can then use with their congregations.

Congregation

- ▶ **Oakhurst PC, Decatur, GA (Atlanta) - Intercultural congregation.** Virtual 'grief support groups' co-facilitated by clinical/pastoral care pairs for processing the grief and trauma of racial injustice/COVID-19, identifying individuals needing additional support and making appropriate referrals.

Congregation

- ▶ **Columbia PC, Vancouver, WA (Cascades)** - Comprehensive mental health ministry strategy: **Training of certified Mental Health First Aid trainers (3) to offer Mental Health First Aid training to pastor +3 for every congregation in presbytery, facilitate ongoing monthly caregiver support group & activities for persons with dementia/cognitive impairment, evidence-based grief support series: *Finding Meaning: The Sixth Stage of Grief*, partnering with NAMI and other local experts to provide speakers and resources to raise awareness, do MI education, address stigma.**

Congregation

- ▶ **First PC, Ashland, OR (Cascades)** - Education to end stigma around mental illnesses, role-appropriate training in risk recognition/intervention for suicide /substance misuse. Intensive behavioral skills training in de-escalation for clergy, loved ones, non-profit staff, police, library workers interacting with persons affected by serious untreated mental illnesses/substance use disorders, with aim of increasing understanding and preventing people from ending up incarcerated rather than getting treatment.

Congregation

- ▶ **First Spanish PC, Brooklyn, NY (NYC)** - bilingual and intercultural community. 'First responder training' with ongoing support, ongoing support group for caregivers, support group for youth affected by trauma of racial violence in the community.

Congregation

- ▶ **First PC, Yorktown, NY (Hudson River)** - Collaborating with Pathways to Promise to implement Companionship Model of mental health ministry (hospitality, side-by-side, listening & accompaniment) for enhancing mental health ministry in the congregation and wider community. Includes formal evaluation of the model.

Congregation

- ▶ **El Buen Vecino PC - (Central Florida)** - bilingual (Spanish) and intercultural congregation. Education about mental health and mental illnesses for congregation; support group facilitated mental health professional/church member-- 'Casa de Esperanza' for families affected by Down's Syndrome. Use of creative arts to facilitate inclusion and participation in congregational life.

Congregation

- ▶ **Stone PC Church of Willow Glen, San Jose, CA (San Jose)** - facilitated Bible Study (Psalms) & support group led by and for persons facing mental health challenges and their loved ones.

Congregation

- ▶ **Parkview PC, Sacramento CA (Sacramento)** - Intercultural congregation, predominantly Asian American (Japanese). Hosting of events featuring culturally appropriate mental health expert/s to be followed up with a survey with the aim of overcoming stigma and opening-up a conversation about mental health.

Congregation

- ▶ **Wilton PC, Wilton, CT (Southern New England)** - Hosted community-wide kick-off event for mental health ministry: 'Celebration of Recovery Day'. Festival atmosphere with food trucks, live music, mental health workshops, mental health service provider booths, well-attended by congregants from faith communities, persons/loved ones with substance issues, mental health professionals and service providers. Producing three videos dealing with aspects of mental health ministry, such as overcoming stigma.

Congregation

- ▶ **San Gabriel PC (Mission) - on hold for COVID-19** Organize in-person county-wide events and smaller individual events to bring together church leaders, community leaders, emergency responders, and local mental health providers to raise awareness of mental health issues and available resources/services in fast-growing county.

Presbytery

- ▶ **Denver Presbytery** - Working with interfaith partners to conduct series of deep listening interviews across a racially/culturally diverse pool of congregations to learn about the needs and challenges of mental health ministry for the purpose of relationship-building and informing subsequent resourcing. (awaiting other funder)

For more information

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